





BURNET'S
THEORY
OF THE
EARTH.







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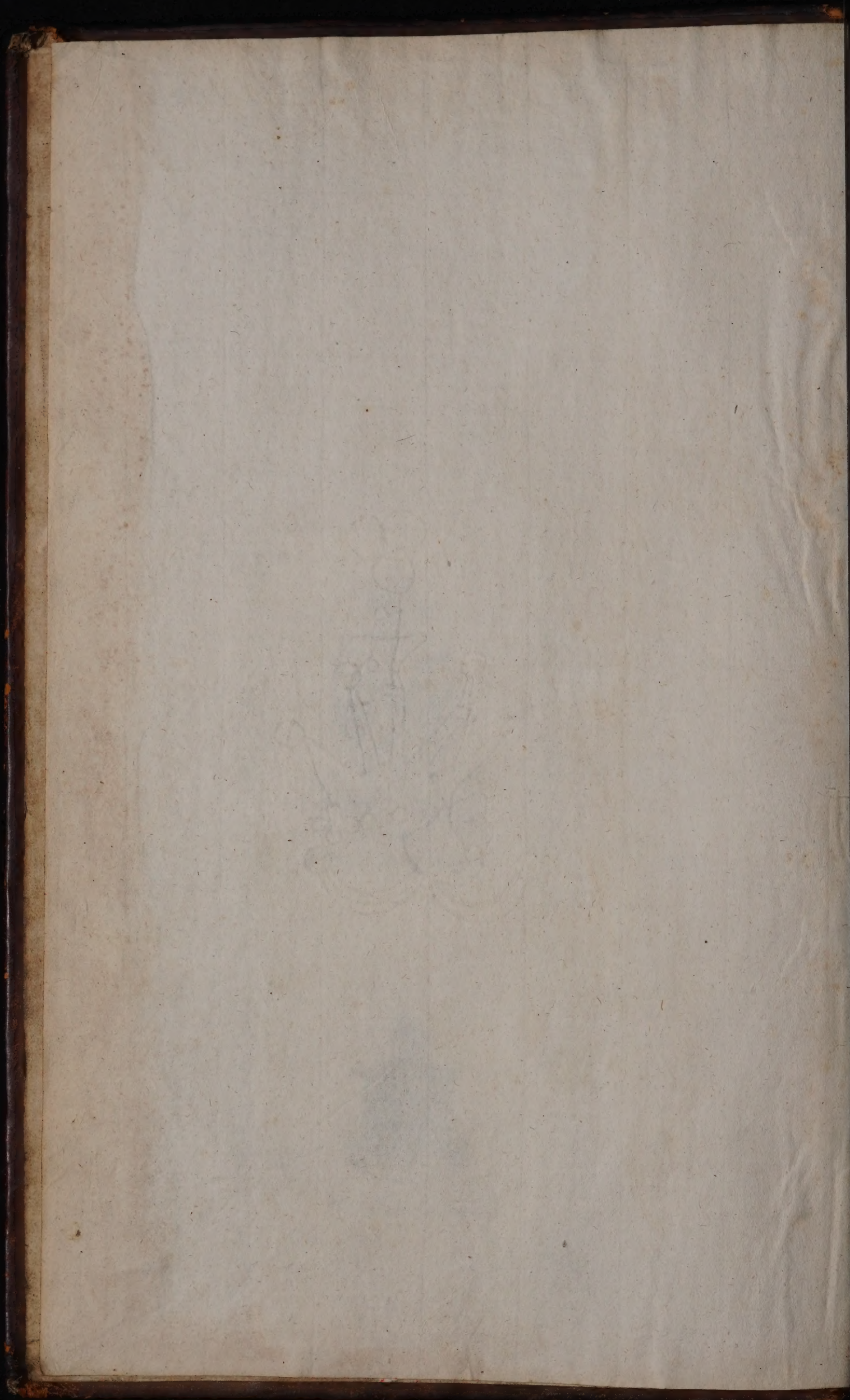


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52



A
R E V I E W
OF THE
T H E O R Y
OF THE
E A R T H,
And of its
P R O O F S:
ESPECIALLY
IN REFERENCE TO
S C R I P T U R E.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *R. Norton*, for *Walter Kettilby*, at the Bishop's-
Head in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*. 1690.

A
REVIEW
OF THE
THEORY
OF THE
FARTHER
And of its
PROCESSES
ESPECIALLY
IN REFERENCE TO
SCRIPTURE

LONDON.

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A REVIEW
OF THE
THEORY
OF THE
EARTH.

TO take a review of this Theory of the Earth, which we have now finish'd, We must consider, first, the extent of it: and then the principal parts whereof it consists. It reaches, as you see, from one end of the World to the other: From the first Chaos to the last day, and the Consummation of all things. This, probably, will run the length of Seven Thousand Years: which is a good competent space of time to exercise our thoughts upon, and to observe the several Scenes which Nature and Providence bring into View within the compass of so many Ages.

The matter and principal parts of this Theory, are such things as are recorded in Scripture. We do not feign a Subject, and then descant upon it, for diversion; but endeavour to give an intelligible and rational account of such matters of Fact, past or future, as are there specified and declar'd. What it hath seem'd good to the Holy Ghost to communicate to us, by History or Prophecy, concerning the several States and general Changes of this Earth, makes the Argument of our Discourse. Therefore the Things themselves must be taken for granted, in one sence or other: seeing, besides all other proofs, they have the

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

authority of a Revelation; and our business is only to give such an explication of them, as shall approve it self to the faculties of man, and be conformable to Scripture.

We will therefore first set down the things themselves, that make the subject matter of this Theory: and remind you of our explication of them. Then recollect the general proofs of that explication, from reason and nature: but more fully and particularly shew how it is grounded upon Scripture. The primary *Phænomena* whereof we are to give an account, are these Five or Six.

- I. *The original of the Earth from a Chaos.*
- II. *The state of Paradise, and the Ante-diluvian World.*
- III. *The Universal Deluge.*
- IV. *The Universal Conflagration.*
- V. *The Renovation of the World, or the New Heavens and New Earth.*
- VI. *The Consummation of all things.*

These are unquestionably in Scripture; and these all relate, as you see, to the several forms, states, and revolutions of this Earth. We are therefore oblig'd to give a clear and coherent account of these *Phænomena*, in that order and consecution wherein they stand to one another.

There are also in Scripture some other things, relating to the same Subjects, that may be call'd the secondary ingredients of this Theory, and are to be referr'd to their respective primary heads. Such are, for instance,

- I. *The Longevity of the Ante-diluvians.*
- II. *The Rupture of the Great Abyss, at the Deluge.*
- III. *The appearing of the Rainbow after the Deluge: as a sign that there never should be a second Flood.*

These things Scripture hath also left upon record: as directions and indications how to understand the Ante-diluvian state, and the Deluge it self. Whosoever

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

ever therefore shall undertake to write the Theory of the Earth, must think himself bound to give us a just explication of these secondary Phenomena, as well as of the primary; and that in such a dependance and connexion, as to make them give and receive light from one another.

This part of the Task is concerning the World behind us, Times and Things pass'd, that are already come to light. The remainder is concerning the World before us, Times and Things to come: that lie yet in the bosome of Providence, and in the seeds of Nature. And these are chiefly the *Conflagration* of the World, and the *Renovation* of it. When these are over and expir'd, then comes the end, as S. Paul says. *1 Cor. 15.* Then the Heavens and the Earth fly away, as S. John says. *Apoc. 20.* Then is the *Consummation* of all things, and the last period of this sublunary World, whatsoever it is. Thus far the Theorist must go, and pursue the motions of Nature, till all things are brought to rest and silence. And in this latter part of the Theory, there is also a collateral Phenomenon, the *Millennium*, or Thousand years Reign of Christ and his Saints, upon Earth, to be consider'd. For this, according as it is represented in Scripture, does imply a change in the Natural World, as well as in the Moral: and therefore must be accounted for, in the Theory of the Earth. At least it must be there determin'd, whether that state of the World, which is singular and extraordinary, will be before or after the Conflagration.

These are the Principals and Incidents of this Theory of the Earth, as to the matter and subject of it: which, you see, is both important, and wholly taken out of Scripture. As to our explication of these points, that is sufficiently known, being set down at large in four Books of this Theory. Therefore it remains only, having seen the matter of the Theory, to examine the Form of it, and the proofs of it: for from these two things it must receive its censure. As to the form, the characters of a regular Theory seem to be these three; *Few and easie Postulatums: Union of Parts:* and *a Fitness to answer, fully and clearly, all the Phenomena to which it is to be apply'd.* We

4 *A Review of the Theory of the Earth.*

We think our Hypothesis does not want any of these Characters. As to the First, we take but one single *Postulatum* for the whole Theory: and that an easie one, warranted both by Scripture and Antiquity: Namely, *That this Earth rise, at first, from a Chaos.* As to the second, *Union of parts*, The whole Theory is but one Series of Causes and Effects from that first Chaos. Besides, you can scarce admit any one part of it, first, last, or intermediate, but you must, in consequence of that, admit all the rest. Grant me but that the Deluge is truly explain'd, and I'll desire no more for proof of all the Theory. Or, if you begin at the other end, and grant the *New Heavens and New Earth* after the Conflagration, you will be led back again to the first Heavens and first Earth that were before the Flood. For St. *John* says, that *New Earth* was without a Sea: *Apoc. 21. 1.* And it was a *Renovation*, or *Restitution* to some former state of things: there was therefore some former Earth without a Sea; which not being the present Earth, it must be the Ante-diluvian. Besides, both St. *John*, and the Prophet *Isaias*, have represented the New Heavens and New Earth, as *Paradisiacal*; According as is prov'd, *Book the 4th. ch. 2.* And having told us the form of the New-future-Earth, that it will have *no Sea*, it is a reasonable inference that there was no Sea in the *Paradisiacal Earth*. However from the form of this Future Earth, which St. *John* represents to us, we may at least conclude, That an *Earth without a Sea* is no Chimæra, or impossibility: but rather a fit seat and habitation for the Just and the Innocent.

Thus you see the parts of the Theory link and hold fast one another: according to the second character. And as to the third, of being *suited to the Phænomena*, we must refer that to the next head, of *Proofs*. It may be truly said, that bare coherence and union of parts is not a sufficient proof; The parts of a Fable or Romance may hang aptly together, and yet have no truth in them. This is enough indeed to give the title of a just Composition to any work, but not of a true one: till it appear that the conclusions and explications are grounded upon good natural evidence,
or

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

5

or upon good Divine authority. We must therefore proceed now to the third thing to be consider'd in a Theory, *What* its Proofs are: or the grounds upon which it stands, whether Sacred or Natural.

According to Natural evidence, things are proved from their Causes or their Effects. And we think we have this double order of proofs for the truth of our Hypothesis. As to the method of Causes, we proceed from what is more simple, to what is more compound: and build all upon one foundation. Go but to the Head of the Theory, and you will see the Causes lying in a train before you, from first to last. And tho' you did not know the Natural history of the World, past or future, you might, by intuition, foretell it, as to the grand revolutions and successive faces of Nature, through a long series of Ages. If we have given a true account of the motions of the Chaos, we have also truly form'd the first habitable Earth. And if that be truly form'd, we have thereby given a true account of the state of Paradise, and of all that depends upon it. And not of that onely, but also of the universal Deluge. Both these we have shewn in their causes: The one from the Form of that Earth, and the other from the Fall of it into the Abyss. And tho' we had not been made acquainted with these things by Antiquity, we might, in contemplation of the Causes, have truly conceiv'd them, as properties or incidents to the First Earth. But as to the Deluge, I do not say, that we might have calculated the Time, manner, and other circumstances of it: These things were regulated by Providence, in subordination to the Moral World. But that there would be, at one time or other, a disruption of that Earth, or of the Great Abyss: and in consequence of it, an universal Deluge: So far, I think, the light of a Theory might carry us.

Furthermore, In consequence of this disruption of the Primeval Earth, at the Deluge, the present Earth was made hollow and cavernous: and by that means, (due preparations being used) capable of *Combustion*, or of perishing by an universal Fire: Yet, to speak ingenuously, This is as hard a step to be made, in ver-
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*Theor. book 3.
ch. 7, & 8.*

tue of Natural causes, as any in the whole Theory. But in recompence of that defect, the Conflagration is so plainly and literally taught us in Scripture, and avow'd by Antiquity, that it can fall under no dispute, as to the thing it self. And as to a capacity or disposition to it in the present Earth, that I think is sufficiently made out.

Then, the Conflagration admitted, in that way it is explain'd in the 3^d. Book: The Earth, you see, is, by that fire, reduc'd to a second Chaos. A Chaos truly so call'd. And from that, as from the First, arises another Creation, or *New Heavens* and a *New Earth*; By the same causes, and in the same form, with the Paradisiacal. This is the *Renovation* of the World: The *Restitution* of all things: mentioned both by Scripture and Antiquity: and by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *St. Peter* and *St. John*, call'd the *New Heavens* and *New Earth*. With this, as the last period, and most glorious Scene of all humane affairs, our Theory concludes, as to this method of Causes, whereof we are now speaking.

I say, here it ends as to the *method of Causes*. For tho' we pursue the Earth still further, even to its last Dissolution: which is call'd the Consummation of all things: yet all, that we have superadded upon that occasion, is but Problematical: and may, without prejudice to the Theory, be argued and disputed on either hand. I do not know, but that our conjectures there may be well grounded: but however, not springing so directly from the same root, or, at least, not by ways, so clear and visible, I leave that part undecided. Especially seeing we pretend to write no more than the *Theory of the Earth*, and therefore as we begin no higher than the *Chaos*, so we are not obliged to go any further than to the last state of a Terrestrial consistency: which is that of the *New Heavens* and the *New Earth*.

This is the first natural proof, From the order of Causes. The second is from the consideration of Effects. Namely of such effects as are already in being. And therefore this proof can extend onely to that part of the Theory, that explains the present and past form

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

form and Phænomena of the Earth. What is Future, must be left to a further trial, when the things come to pass, and present themselves to be examin'd and compar'd with the Hypothesis. As to the present Form of the Earth, we call all Nature to witness for us: The Rocks and the Mountains, the Hills and the Valleys, the deep and wide Sea, and the Caverns of the Ground: Let these speak, and tell their origine: How the Body of the Earth came to be thus torn and mangled: If this strange and irregular structure was not the effect of a ruine: and of such a ruine as was universal over the face of the whole Globe. But we have given such a full explication of this, in the first part of the Theory, from *Chapt. the 9th.* to the end of that Treatise, that we dare stand to the judgment, of any that reads those four Chapters, to determine if the Hypothesis does not answer all those Phænomena, easily and adequately.

The next Phænomenon to be consider'd, is the *Deluge*, with its adjuncts. This also is fully explain'd by our Hypothesis, in the *2d.* *3d.* and *6th.* Chapters of the first Book. Where it is shewn, that the *Mosaical Deluge*, that is, an universal Inundation of the whole Earth, above the tops of the highest Mountains, made by a breaking open of the Great Abyss, (for thus far *Moses* leads us) is fully explain'd by this Hypothesis, and cannot be conceiv'd in any other method. There are no sources or stores of Water sufficient for such an effect: that may be drawn upon the Earth, and drawn off again, but by supposing such an Abyss, and such a Disruption of it, as the Theory represents.

Lastly, As to the Phænomena of Paradise and the Ante-diluvian World, we have set them down in order in the *2d.* Book: and apply'd to each of them its proper explication, from the same Hypothesis. We have also given an account of that Character which Antiquity always assign'd to the first age of the World, or the Golden Age, as they call'd it: namely, *Equality of Seasons* throughout the Year, or a perpetual Equinox. We have also taken in all the adjuncts or concomitants of these States, as they are mention'd in Scripture. *The Longevity* of the Ante-diluvians, and

Theor. Book
2. chap. 5.

the declension of their age by degrees, after the Flood. As also that wonderful Phænomenon, the *Rainbow*: which appear'd to *Noah* for a Sign, that the Earth should never undergo a second Deluge. And we have shewn, wherein the force and propriety of that Sign consisted, for confirming *Noah's* faith in the promise and in the divine veracity.

Thus far we have explain'd the past Phænomena of the Natural World. The rest are Futurities, which still lie hid in their Causes; and we cannot properly prove a Theory from effects that are not yet in being. But so far as they are foretold in Scripture, both as to substance and circumstance, in prosecution of the same Principles we have ante-dated their birth, and shew'd how they will come to pass. We may therefore, I think, reasonably conclude, That this Theory has performed its task and answer'd its title: having given an account of all the general changes of the Natural World, as far as either Sacred History looks backwards, or Sacred Prophecy looks forwards. So far as the one tells us what is past in Nature, and the other what is to come. And if all this be nothing but an appearance of truth, 'tis a kind of fatality upon us to be deceiv'd.

SO much for Natural Evidence, from the Causes or Effects. We now proceed to Scripture, which will make the greatest part of this Review. The Sacred Basis upon which the whole Theory stands, is the doctrine of *S. Peter*, deliver'd in his *Second Epistle* and *Third Chapter*, concerning the *Triple Order* and Succession of the Heavens and the Earth. That comprehends the whole extent of our Theory: which indeed is but a large Commentary upon *S. Peter's* Text. The Apostle sets out a threefold state of the Heavens and Earth: with some general properties of each: taken

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

9

taken from their different Constitution and different Fate. The Theory takes the same threefold state of the Heavens and the Earth: and explains more particularly, wherein their different Constitution consists: and how, under the conduct of Providence, their different fate depends upon it. Let us set down the Apostle's words, with the occasion of them: and their plain sence, according to the most easie and natural explication.

Ver. 3. *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.* 2 Pet. 3.

4. *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

5. *For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God, the heavens were of old, and the earth consisting of water and by water.*

6. *Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.*

7. *But the heavens and the earth that are now, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.*

10. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.*

13. *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

This is the whole Discourse so far as relates to our Subject. S. Peter, you see, had met with some that scoff'd at the future destruction of the World, and the coming of our Saviour; and they were men, it seems, that pretended to Philosophy and Argument; and they use this argument for their opinion, *Seeing there hath been no change in Nature, or in the World, from the beginning to this time, why should we think there will be any change for the future?*

The Apostle answers to this, That they willingly forget or are ignorant that there were Heavens of old, and an Earth, so and so constituted; consisting of Water and by Water; by reason whereof that World, or those Heavens and that Earth, perish'd in a Deluge of Water. But, saith he, the Heavens and the Earth that are now, are of another constitution, fitted and reserved to another fate, namely to perish by Fire. And after these are perish'd, there will be New Heavens and a New Earth, according to God's promise.

This is an easie Paraphrase, and the plain and genuine sence of the Apostle's discourse; and no body, I think, would ever look after any other sence, if this did not draw them into paths they do not know, and to conclusions which they do not fancy. This sence, you see, hits the objection directly, or the Cavil which these scoffers made; and tells them, that they vainly pretend that there hath been no change in the World since the beginning, for there was one sort of Heavens and Earth before the Flood, and another sort now; the first having been destroyed at the Deluge. So that the Apostle's argument stands upon this Foundation, That there is a diversity betwixt the present Heavens and Earth, and the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth; take away that, and you take away all the force of his Answer.

Then as to his *New Heavens* and *New Earth* after the Conflagration, they must be material and natural, in the same sence and signification with the former Heavens and Earth; unless you will offer open violence to the Text. So that this Triplicity of the Heavens and the Earth, is the first, obvious, plain sence of the Apostle's discourse: which every one would readily accept, if it did not draw after it a long train of Consequences, and lead them into other Worlds than they ever thought of before, or are willing to enter upon now.

But we shall have occasion by and by, to examine this Text more fully in all its circumstances. Give me leave in the mean time to observe, that *S. Paul* also implies that *triple Creation* which *S. Peter* expresses. *S. Paul*, I say, in the 8th chap. to the *Rom.* ver. 20, 21. tells

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

11

tell us of a *Creation* that will be *redeem'd from Vanity*: which are the new Heavens and new Earth to come. A *Creation in subjection to Vanity*: which is the present state of the World. And a *Creation* that was subjected to Vanity, in hopes of being restor'd: which was the first Paradisiacal Creation. And these are the three states of the Natural World, which make the subject of our Theory.

To these two places of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, I might add that third in *St. John*, concerning the new Heavens and new Earth; with that distinguishing Character, that the Earth was *without a Sea*. As this distinguisheth it from the present Earth, so, being a *Restitution* or *Restoration*, as we noted before, it must be the same with some former Earth: and consequently, it implies that there was another precedent state of the natural World, to which this is a Restitution. These three places I alledge, as comprehending and confirming the Theory in its full extent. But we do not suppose them all of the same force and clearness. *St. Peter* leads the way, and gives light and strength to the other two. When a Point is prov'd by one clear Text, we allow others, as auxiliaries, that are not of the same clearness; But being open'd, receive light from the primary Text, and reflect it upon the Argument.

So much for the Theory in general. We will now take one or two principal heads of it, which virtually contain all the rest, and examine them more strictly and particularly, in reference to their agreement with Scripture. The two Heads we pitch upon, shall be, our Explication of the Deluge, and our Explication of the new Heavens and new Earth. We told you before, these two were as the Hinges, upon which all the Theory moves, and which hold the parts of it in firm union one with another. As to the Deluge, if I have explain'd that aright, by the Disruption of the Great Abyfs, and the Dissolution of the Earth that cover'd it, all the rest follows in such a chain of consequences, as cannot be broken. Wherefore in order to the proof of that explication, and of all that depends upon it, I will make bold to lay down this Proposition,

tion, *That our Hypothesis concerning the universal Deluge, is not onely more agreeable to Reason and Philosophy than any other yet propos'd to the World, but is also more agreeable to Scripture.* Namely, to such places of Scripture, as reflect upon the *Deluge*, the *Abyss*, and the form of the *first Earth*. And particularly, to the *History of Noah's Flood*, as recorded by *Moses*. If I can make this good, it will, doubtless, give satisfaction to all intelligent Persons. And I desire their patience, if I proceed slowly. We will divide our task into parts, and examine them separately: First, by Scripture in general, and then by *Moses* his history and description of the Flood.

Our Hypothesis of the Deluge consists of three principal Heads, or differs remarkably in three things from the common explication. First, in that we suppose the Antediluvian Earth to have been of another Form and constitution from the present Earth: with the Abyss placed under it.

Secondly, in that we suppose the Deluge to have been made, not by any inundation of the Sea, or overflowing of Fountains and Rivers: nor (principally) by any excess of rains: but by a real dissolution of the exterior Earth, and disruption of the Abyss which it cover'd. These are the two principal points, to which may be added, as a Corollary,

Thirdly, that the Deluge was not in the nature of a standing Pool: the Waters lying every where level, of an equal depth and with an uniform Surface: but was made by a fluctuation and commotion of the Abyss upon the disruption: which commotion being over, the Waters retired into their Channels, and let the dry Land appear.

These are the most material and fundamental parts of our Hypothesis: and these being prov'd consonant to Scripture, there can be no doubt of the rest.

We begin with the first: That the Ante-diluvian Earth was of another form and constitution from the present Earth, with the Abyss placed under it. This is confirm'd in Scripture, both by such places as assert a diversity in general: and by other places that intimate to us, wherein that diversity consisted, and what was

was the form of the first Earth. That discourse of St. *Peter's*, which we have set before you, concerning the past, present, and future, Heavens and Earth, is so full a proof of this diversity in general, that you must either allow it, or make the Apostle's argumentation of no effect. He speaks plainly of the natural World, *The Heavens and the Earth*: And he makes a plain distinction, or rather opposition, betwixt those before and after the Flood: so that the least we can conclude from his words, is a diversity betwixt them; In answer to that Identity or immutability of Nature, which the Scoffers pretended to have been ever since the beginning.

But tho' the Apostle, to me, speaks plainly of the *Natural World*, and distinguishes that which was before the Flood, from the present: Yet there are some that will allow neither of these to be contain'd in St. *Peter's* words; and by that means would make this whole Discourse of little or no effect, as to our purpose. And seeing we, on the contrary, have made it the chief Scripture-basis of the whole Theory of the Earth, we are oblig'd to free it from those false glosses or mis-interpretations, that lessen the force of its testimony, or make it wholly ineffectual.

These Interpreters say, that St. *Peter* meant no more than to mind these Scoffers, that the World was once destroy'd by a Deluge of Water: meaning the *Animate World*, Mankind and living Creatures. And that it shall be destroy'd again by another Element, namely by Fire. So as there is no opposition or diversity betwixt the two Natural Worlds, taught or intended by the Apostle; but onely in reference to their different fate or manner of perishing, and not of their different nature or constitution.

Here are two main points, you see, wherein our interpretations of this discourse of the Apostles, differ. First, in that they make the Apostle (in that *sixth verse*) to understand onely the World *Animate*, or men and brute Creatures. That these were indeed destroy'd, but not the Natural World, or the form and constitution of the then Earth and Heavens. Secondly, that there is no diversity or opposition made by St. *Peter* betwixt

betwixt the ancient Heavens and Earth, and the present, as to their form and constitution. We pretend that these are mis-apprehensions, or mis-representations of the sense of the Apostle in both respects, and offer these reasons to prove them to be so.

For the first point ; That the Apostle speaks here of the natural World, particularly in the 6th. Verse ; and that it perish'd, as well as the animate, these Considerations seem to prove.

First, because the argument or ground these Scoffers went upon, was taken from the natural World, its constancy and permanency in the same state from the beginning ; therefore if the Apostle answers *ad idem*, and takes away their argument, he must understand the same natural World, and show that it hath been chang'd, or hath perish'd.

You will say, it may be, the Apostle doth not deny, nor take away the ground they went upon, but denies the consequence they made from it ; that *therefore there would be no change, because there had been none*. No, neither doth he do this, if by the *World* in the 6th. Verse, he understands Mankind onely ; for their ground was this, *there hath been no change in the natural World* ; Their consequence, this, *therefore there will be none*, nor any Conflagration. Now the Apostle's answer, according to you, is this, *you forget that Mankind hath been destroyed in a Deluge*. And what then ? what's this to the natural World, whereof they were speaking ? this takes away neither antecedent nor consequent, neither ground nor inference ; nor any way toucheth their argument, which proceeded from the natural World to the natural World. Therefore you must either suppose that the Apostle takes away their ground, or he takes away nothing.

Secondly, what is it that the Apostle tells these Scoffers they were ignorant of ? that there was a Deluge, that destroyed Mankind ? They could not be ignorant of that, nor pretend to be so ; It was therefore the constitution of those old Heavens and Earth, and the change or destruction of them at the Deluge, that they were ignorant of, or did not attend to ; and of this the Apostle minds them. These Scoffers appear
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A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

15

to have been *Jews* by the phrase they use, *since the Fathers fell asleep*, which in both parts of it is a Judaical expression; And does St. Peter tell the *Jews* that had *Moses* read to them every Sabbath, that *they were ignorant that Mankind was once destroyed with a Deluge in the Days of Noah?* or could they pretend to be ignorant of that without making themselves ridiculous both to *Jews* and Christians? Besides, these do not seem to have been of the vulgar amongst them, for they bring a Philosophical argument for their opinion; and also in their very argument they refer to the History of the Old Testament, in saying, *Since the Fathers fell asleep*, amongst which Fathers, *Noah* was one of the most remarkable.

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and immutability of Nature; and *Maimonides* himself was of this principle, and gives the same reason for it with the Scoffers here in the Text, *Quod mundus retinet & sequitur consuetudinem suam.* And as to those of the *Jews* that were *Aristoteleans*, it was very suitable to their principles to hold the incorruptibility of the World, as their Master did. *Vid. Med. in loc.*

Thirdly, the design of the Apostle is to prove to them, or to dispose them to the belief of the Conflagration, or future destruction of the World; which I suppose, you will not deny to be a destruction of the natural World; therefore to prove or persuade this, he must use an argument taken from a precedent destruction of the natural World; for to give an instance of the perishing of Mankind onely, would not reach home to his purpose. And you are to observe here that the Apostle does not proceed against them barely by authority; for what would that have boot-ed? If these Scoffers would have submitted to authority, they had already the authority of the Prophets and Apostles in this point: but he deals with them at their own weapon, and opposes reasons to reasons; What hath been done may be done, and if the natural World hath been once destroyed, 'tis not hard, nor unreasonable, to suppose those Prophecies to be true, that say it shall be destroyed again.

Fourthly, unless we understand here the natural World, we make the Apostle both redundant in his discourse, and also very obscure in an easie argument. If his design was onely to tell them that Mankind was once destroy'd in a Deluge, what's that to the

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Heavens

Heavens and the Earth? the 5th. Verse would be superfluous; which yet he seems to make the foundation of his discourse. He might have told them how Mankind had perish'd before with a Deluge, and aggravated that destruction as much as he pleas'd, without telling them how the Heavens and the Earth were constituted then; what was that to the purpose, if it had no dependance or connection with the other? In the precedent Chapter, Verse 5th. when he speaks onely of the Floods destroying Mankind, he mentions nothing of the Heavens or the Earth: and if you make him to intend no more here, what he says more is superfluous.

I also add, that you make the Apostle very obscure and operose in a very easie argument. How easie had it been for him, without this *Apparatus*, to have told them, as he did before, that God brought a Flood upon the World of the ungodly; and not given us so much difficulty to understand his sence, or such a suspition and appearance, that he intended something more; for that there is at least a great appearance and tendency to a further sence, I think none can deny; And St. *Austin*, *Didymus Alex.* *Bede*, as we shall see hereafter, understood it plainly of the natural World: Also modern Expositors and Criticks; as *Cajetan*, *Estius*, *Drusius*, *Heinsius*, have extended it to the natural World, more or less; tho' they had no Theory to mislead them, nor so much as an hypothesis to support them; but attended onely to the tenor of the Apostle's discourse, which constrain'd them to that sence, in whole or in part.

Fifthly, the opposition carries it upon the natural World. The opposition lies betwixt the *οἱ ἐκ παλαιῶν αἰώνων ἡ γῆ* and *οἱ νῦν αἰώνων ἡ γῆ*, the Heavens that were of old, and the Earth, and the present Heavens and Earth, or the two natural Worlds. And if they will not allow them to be oppos'd in their natures (which yet we shall prove by and by) at least they must be oppos'd in their fate; and as This is to perish by fire, so That perish'd by water; And if it perish'd by water, it perish'd; which is all we contend for at present.

Lastly,

Lastly, if we would be as easily govern'd in the exposition of this place, as we are of other places of Scripture, it would be enough to suggest, that in reason and fairness of interpretation, the same World is destroy'd in the 6th verse, that was describ'd in the foregoing verse; but it is the Natural World that is describ'd there, the Heavens and the Earth, so and so constituted; and therefore in fairness of interpretation they ought to be understood here; that World being the subject that went immediately before, and there being nothing in the words that restrains them to the animate World or to Mankind. In the 2d chapter. 5. the Apostle does restrain the word κόσμος by adding ἀσεβῶν, the World of the ungodly; but here 'tis not only illimited, but according to the context, both preceding and following, to be extended to the Natural World. I say by the following context too, for so it answers to the World that is to perish by Fire; which will reach the frame of Nature as well as Mankind.

For a conclusion of this first point, I will set down S. Austin's judgment in this case; who in several parts of his works hath interpreted this place of S. Peter, of the natural world. As to the heavens, he hath these words in his Exposition upon Genesis, *Hos etiam aerios celos quondam periisse Diluvio, in quâdam earum quæ Canonica appellantur, Epistolâ legimus. We read in one of the Epistles called Canonical, meaning this of S. Peter's, that the aerial heavens perish'd in the Deluge. And he concerns himself there to let you know that it was not the starry heavens that were destroy'd; the waters could not reach so high; but the regions of our air. Then afterwards he hath these words Facilius eos (celos) secundum illius Epistolæ auctoritatem credimus periisse, & alios, sicut ibi scribitur, repositos. We do more easily believe, according to the authority of that Epistle, those heavens to have perish'd; and others, as it is there written, substituted in their place. In like manner, and to the same sence, he hath these words upon Psal. 101. Aerii utique celi perierunt ut propinqui Terris, secundum quod dicuntur volucres celi; sunt autem & celi colorum, superiores in Firmamento, sed utram*

Et ipsi perituri sint igni, an hi soli, qui etiam diluvio perierunt, disceptatio est aliquanto scrupuloser inter doctos. And in his Book *de Civ. Dei*, he hath several passages to the same purpose, *Quemadmodum in Apostolica illa Epistolâ à toto pars accipitur, quod diluvio periisse dictus est mundus, quamvis sola ejus cum suis celis pars ima perierit.* These being to the same effect with the first citation, I need not make them English; and this last place refers to the Earth as well as the Heavens, as several other places in *S. Austin* do, whereof we shall give you an account, when we come to shew his judgment concerning the second point, *the diversity of the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian World.* This being but a foretaste of his good will and inclinations towards this doctrine:

These considerations alledg'd, so far as I can judge, are full and unanswerable proofs, that this discourse of the Apostle's comprehends and refers to the Natural World; and consequently they warrant our interpretation in this particular, and destroy the contrary. We have but one step more to make good, *That there was a change made in this natural world at the Deluge*, according to the Apostle; and this is to confute the second part of their interpretation, which supposeth that *S. Peter* makes no distinction or opposition betwixt the antediluvian Heavens and Earth, and the present Heavens and Earth, in that respect.

This second difference betwixt us, methinks, is still harsher than the first; and contrary to the very form, as well as to the matter of the Apostle's discourse. For there is a plain antithesis, or opposition made betwixt the Heavens and the Earth of old (*ver. the 5th*) and the Heavens and the Earth that are now (*verse the 7th*) *οἱ ἐκ παλαι ἑρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ* and *οἱ νῦν ἑρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ*, and the adversative particle, *but*, you see marks the opposition; so that it is full and plain according to Grammar and Logick. And that the parts or members of this opposition differ in nature from one another, is certain from this, because otherwise the Apostle's argument or discourse is of no effect, concludes nothing to the purpose; he makes no answer to the objection, nor proves any thing against the Scoffers,

Scoffers, unless you admit that diversity. For they said, *All things had been the same from the beginning in the Natural World*, and unless he say, as he manifestly does, that there hath been a change in Nature, and that the Heavens and Earth that are now, are different from the ancient Heavens and Earth, which perish'd at the Flood, he says nothing to destroy their argument, nor to confirm the Prophetical doctrine of the future destruction of the Natural World.

This, I think, would be enough to satisfy any clear and free mind concerning the meaning of the Apostle, but because I desire to give as full a light to this place as I can, and to put the sense of it out of controversy, if possible, for the future, I will make some further remarks to confirm this exposition.

And we may observe that several of those reasons which we have given to prove, That the *Natural World* is understood by *S. Peter*, are double reasons; and do also prove the other point in question, a *diversity betwixt the two Natural Worlds*, the Anti-diluvian and the present. As for instance, unless you admit this diversity betwixt the two natural Worlds, you make the 5th verse in this Chapter superfluous and useless: and you must suppose the Apostle to make an inference here without premises. In the 6th verse he makes an inference, * *Whereby the* World, that then was, perish'd in a Deluge; what does this *whereby* relate to? *by reason of what?* sure of the particular constitution of the Heavens and the Earth immediately before describ'd. Neither would it have signified any thing to the Scoffers, for the Apostle to have told them how the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth were constituted, if they were constituted just in the same manner as the present.

Foliam tolleret, supponeretque illasores illos ignorasse quod olim fuerit Diluvium; non posse supra ostendimus.

Besides, what is it, as I ask'd before, that the Apostle tells these Scoffers they were ignorant of? does he not say formally and expressly (*ver. 5.*) that they were ignorant that the Heavens and the Earth were constituted

* *si* *de*,
per qua. Vul-
gat. *Quam-*
obrem, Beza.
Qua de cau-
sa, Grot.
Nemo inter-
pretum red-
didit *si* *de*
per quas;
subintelligen-
do aquas.
Hoc enim
argumenta-
tionem Apo-
stoli *suppo-*

tuted so and so, before the Flood? but if they were constituted as these present Heavens and Earth are, they were not ignorant of their constitution; nor did pretend to be ignorant, for their own (mistaken) argument supposeth it.

But before we proceed any further, give me leave to note the impropriety of our Translation, in the 5th. Verse, or latter part of it; Εξ ὕδατος ἢ δι' ὕδατος (vel δι' ὕδατος) συνεστῶσα, This we translate *standing in the water, and out of the water*, which is done manifestly in compliance with the present form of the Earth, and the notions of the Translators: and not according to the natural force and sence of the Greek words.

* This phrase or manner of speech συνεστῶσαι ἐκ vel δι' is not unusual in Greek Authors, and upon a like subject; Plato saith, τὸ δὲ κόσμον συνεστῶσαι ἐκ πυρὸς, ὕδατος, ἀέρος, γῆς, but he that should translate Plato, The world stands out of fire, water, &c. would be thought neither Gracian, nor Philosopher. The same phrase is us'd in reciting Heraclitus his opinion, τὰ πάντα ἐκ πυρὸς συνεστῶσαι, ἢ ὡς εἶπε ἀναλύεσθαι. And also in Thales his, which is still nearer to the subject, ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος, φησι, συνεστῶσαι πάντα, which Cicero renders, ex aqua, dixit, constare omnia. So that it is easie to know the true importance of this phrase, and how ill it is render'd in the English, *standing out of the water*.

If one met with this sentence * in a Greek Author, who would ever render it *standing in the water and out of the water?* nor do I know any Latin Translator that hath ventur'd to render them in that sence; nor any Latin Father; St. Austin and St. Jerome I'm sure do not, but *Consistens ex aqua*, or *de aqua*, & *per aquam*: for that later phrase also συνεστῶσαι δι' ὕδατος does not with so good propriety signifie *to stand in the water*, as to consist or subsist by water, or by the help of water, *Tanquam per causam sustentem*; as St. Austin and Jerome render it. Neither does that instance they give from 1 Pet. 3. 20. prove any thing to the contrary, for the Ark was sustain'd by the waters, and the English does render it accordingly.

The Translation being thus rectified, you see the ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth consisted of Water, and by water; which makes way for a second observation to prove our sence of the Text; for if you admit no diversity betwixt those Heavens and Earth, and the present, shew us 'pray, how the present Heavens and Earth consist of water, and by water. What watery constitution have they? The Apostle implies rather, that *The now Heavens and Earth* have a fiery constitution. We have now Meteors of all sorts in the air, winds, hail, snow, lightning, thunder, and all things

things engender'd of fiery exhalations, as well as we have rain; but according to our Theory, the ante-diluvian Heavens, of all these Meteors had none but dew and rain, or watery Meteors onely; and therefore might very aptly be said by the Apostle to be *constituted of water*, or to have a watery *συστασις*. Then the Earth was said to *consist by water*, because it was built upon it, and at first was sustain'd by it. And when such a Key as this is put into our hands, that does so easily unlock this hard passage, and makes it intelligible, according to the just force of the words, why should we pertinaciously adhere to an interpretation, that neither agrees with the words, nor makes any sence that is considerable?

*Book 2. c. 5.
p. 233.*

Whether you refer the words

ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ
ἐν ὕδατι. i.e.

parately, to the Heavens and the Earth, or both to the Earth, or both to both, it will make no great difference as to our interpretation.

Thirdly, If the Apostle had made the ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth the same with the present, his apodosis in the 7th. Verse, should not have been *οἱ δὲ οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ τεθροσσυμένοι εἰσι, &c.* I say, it should not have been by way of antithesis, but of identity or continuation; *And the same Heavens and Earth are kept in store reserv'd unto fire, &c.* Accordingly we see the Apostle speaks thus, as to the Logos, or the Word of God, Verse 7. *τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ*, by the same Word of God; where the thing is the same, he expresseth it as the same; And if it had been the same Heavens and Earth, as well as the same Word of God, Why should he use a mark of opposition for the one, and of identity for the other? to this I do not see what can be fairly answer'd.

Fourthly, the ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth were different from the present, because, as the Apostle intimates, they were such, and so constituted, as made them obnoxious to a Deluge; whereas ours are of such a form, as makes them incapable of a Deluge, and obnoxious to a Conflagration; the just contrary fate.

*Theor.
1 Book. c. 2.*

If you say there was nothing of natural tendency or disposition in either World to their respective fate, but the first might as well have perish'd by fire, as water,

water, and this by water as by fire, you unhinge all Nature and natural providence in that method, and contradict one main scope of the Apostle in this discourse. His first scope is to assert, and mind them of that diversity there was betwixt the ancient Heavens and Earth, and the present; and from that, to prove against those Scoffers, that there had been a change and revolution in Nature; And his second scope seems to be this, to show that diversity to be such, as, under the Divine conduct, leads to a different fate, and expos'd that World to a Deluge; for when he had describ'd the constitution of the first Heavens and Earth, he subjoyns, δι' ὧν ὁ τότε κόσμος ὕδατι κατακλυθεὶς ἀπόλετο. *Quia talis erat, saith Grotius, qualem diximus, constitutio & Terræ & Cæli. WHEREBY the then World perish'd in a Flood of Water.* This whereby notes some kind of causal dependance, and must relate to some means or conditions precedent. It cannot relate to Logos, or *the Word of God*, Grammar will not permit that; therefore it must relate to the state of the antediluvian Heavens and Earth immediately premis'd. And to what purpose indeed should he premise the description of those Heavens and Earth, if it was not to lay a ground for this inference?

Having given these Reasons for the necessity of this Interpretation; in the last place, let's consider St. *Austin's* judgment, and his sence upon this place, as to the point in question. As also the reflections that some other of the Ancients have made upon this doctrine of St. *Peter's*. *Didymus Alexandrinus*, who was for some time St. *Jerome's* Master, made such a severe reflection upon it, that he said this Epistle was corrupted, and should not be admitted into the Canon, because it taught the doctrine of a *Triple* or *Triform* World in this third Chapter. As you may see in his *Enarr. in Epist. Canonicas*. Now this threefold World is first that in the 6th. Verse, *The World that then was*. In the 7th. Verse, *The Heavens and the Earth that are now*. And in the 13th. Verse, *We expect new Heavens and a new Earth, according to his promise*. This seems to be a fair account that St. *Peter* taught the doctrine of a triple World; And I quote this testimony, to show

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

23

show what St. Peter's words do naturally import, even in the judgment of one that was not of his mind. And a Man is not prone to make an exposition against his own Opinion, unless he think the words very pregnant and express.

But St. *Austin* owns the authority of this Epistle, and of this doctrine, as deriv'd from it, taking notice of this Text of St. *Peter's* in several Parts of his Works. We have noted three or four places already to this purpose, and we may further take notice of several passages in his Treatise, *de Civ. Dei*, which confirm our exposition. In his 20th. Book, *ch. 24.* he disputes against *Porphyry*, who had the same Principles with these *Æternalists* in the Text; or, if I may so call them, *Incorruptarians*; and thought the World never had, nor ever would undergo any change, especially as to the Heavens. St. *Austin* could not urge *Porphyry* with the authority of St. *Peter*, for he had no veneration for the Christian Oracles; but it seems he had some for the Jewish, and arguing against him, upon that Text in the Psalms, *Cæli peribunt*, he shows upon occasion how he understands St. *Peter's* destruction of the Old World. *Legitur Cælum & Terra transibunt, Mundus transit, sed puto quod præterit, transit, transibunt aliquantò mitius dicta sunt quàm peribunt. In Epistolâ quoque Petri Apostoli, ubi aquâ inundatus, qui tum erat, periisse dictus est Mundus, satis clarum est quæ pars mundi à toto significata est, & quatenus periisse dicta sit, & qui cæli repositi igni reservandi.* This he explains more fully afterwards by subjoyning a caution (which we cited before) that we must not understand this passage of St. *Peter's*, concerning the destruction of the ante-diluvian World, to take in the whole Universe, and the highest Heavens, but onely the aerial Heavens, and the sublunary World. *In Apostolicâ illâ Epistolâ à toto pars accipitur, quod Diluvio periisse dictus est mundus, quamvis sola ejus, cum suis cælis, pars ima perierit.* In that Apostolical Epistle, a part is signified by the whole, when the World is said to have perished in the Deluge, although the lower part of it onely, with the Heavens belonging to it, perished: that is, the Earth with the regions of the Air that belong to it. And consonant

to this, in his exposition of that hundred and first Psalm, upon those words, *The Heavens are the work of thy hands, They shall perish, but thou shalt endure.* This perishing of the Heavens, he says, S. Peter tells us, hath been once done already, namely, at the Deluge; *Apertè dixit hoc Apostolus Petrus, Cæli erant olim & Terra, de aquâ & per aquam constituti, Dei verbo; per quod qui factus est mundus, aquâ inundatus deperiit; Terra autem & cæli qui nunc sunt, igni reservantur. Jam ergo dixit periisse cælos per Diluvium.*

These places shew us that S. Austin understood S. Peter's discourse to aim at the natural World, and his *periit* or *periisse* (verse 6.) to be of the same force as *peribunt* in the Psalms, when 'tis said the Heavens shall perish; and consequently that the Heavens and the Earth, in this Father's opinion, were as really chang'd and transform'd at the time of the Flood, as they will be at the Conflagration. But we must not expect from S. Austin or any of the Ancients a distinct account of this Apostolical doctrine, as if they knew and acknowledg'd the Theory of the first World; that does not at all appear; but what they said was either from broken Tradition, or extorted from them by the force of the Apostle's words and their own sincerity.

cap. 18.

There are yet other places in S. Austin worthy our consideration upon this subject; especially his exposition of this 3d chap. of S. Peter, as we find it in that same Treatise *de Civ. Dei.* There he compares again, the destruction of the World at the Deluge, with that which shall be at the Conflagration, and supposeth both the Heavens and Earth to have perish'd. *Apostolus commemorans factum ante Diluvium, videtur admonuisse quodammodo quatenus in fine hujus seculi mundum istum peritutum esse credamus. Nam & illo tempore periisse dixit, qui tunc erat, mundum; nec solum orbem terræ, verum etiam cælos.* Then giving his usual caution, That the Stars and starry heavens should not be comprehended in that mundane destruction, He goes on, *Atque hoc modo (penè totus aer) cum terra perierat; cujus Terræ utique prior facies (nempe ante-diluviana) fuerat deleta Diluvio. Qui autem nunc sunt*

sunt celi & terra eodem verbo repositi sunt igni reservandi; Proinde qui celi & quæ Terra, id est, qui mundus, pro eo mundo qui Diluvio periit, ex eadem aqua repositus est, ipse igni novissimo reservatur. Here you see S. Austin's sense upon the whole matter; which is this, That the natural World, the Earth with the Heavens about it, was destroyed and chang'd at the Deluge into the present Heavens and Earth; which shall again in like manner be destroyed and chang'd by the last fire. Accordingly in another place, to add no more, he saith the figure of the (sublunary) world shall be chang'd at the Conflagration, as it was chang'd at the Deluge. *Tunc figura hujus mundi, &c. cap. 16.*

cap. 16.

Thus you see, we have S. Austin on our side, in both parts of our interpretation; that S. Peter's discourse is to be referr'd to the natural inanimate World, and that the present natural World is distinct and different from that which was before the Deluge. And S. Austin having applyed this expressly to S. Peter's doctrine by way of Commentary, it will free us from any crime or affectation of singularity in the exposition we have given of that place.

Venerable Bede hath followed S. Austin's footsteps in this doctrine; for, interpreting S. Peter's *Original World* (*Ἀρχαῖος Κόσμος*.) 2 Pet. 2. 5. he refers both that and this (*chap. 3. 6.*) to the natural inanimate World, which he supposeth to have undergone a change at the Deluge. His words are these, *idem ipse mundus est* (nempe quoad materiam) *in quo nunc humanum genus habitat, quem inhabitaverunt hi qui ante diluvium fuerunt, sed tamen rectè Originalis Mundus, quasi alius, dicitur; quia sicut in consequentibus hujus Epistolæ scriptum continetur, Ille tunc mundus aqua inundatus periit. Cælis videlicet qui erant prius, id est, cunctis aeris hujus turbulenti spaciis, aquarum accrescentium altitudine consumptis, ac Terrâ in alteram faciem, excedentibus aquis, immutata. Nam etsi montes aliqui atque convalles ab initio facti creduntur, non tamen tanti quanti nunc in orbe cernuntur universo. 'Tis the same World (namely, as to the matter and substance of it) which mankind lives in now, and did live*

in before the Flood, but yet that is truly call'd the ORIGINAL WORLD, being as it were another from the present. For 'tis said in the sequel of this Epistle that the World that was then, perish'd in the Deluge; namely, the regions of the air were consumed by the height and excess of the waters, and by the same waters the Earth was chang'd into another form or face. For although some Mountains and Valleys are thought to have been made from the beginning, yet not such great ones as now we see throughout the whole Earth.

You see this Author does not only own a change made at the Deluge, but offers at a further explication wherein that change consisted, viz. that the Mountains and inequalities of the Earth were made greater than they were before the Flood; and so he makes the change or the difference betwixt the two Worlds gradual, rather than specifical, if I may so term it. But we cannot wonder at that, if he had no principles to carry it further, or to make any other sort of change intelligible to him. Bede also pursues the same sence and notion in his interpretation of that fountain, Gen. 2. 5. that watered the face of the Earth before the Flood. And many other transcribers of Antiquity have recorded this Tradition concerning a difference, gradual or specifical, both in the Ante-diluvian heavens (*Gloss. Ordin. Gen. 9. de Irde. Lyr. ibid. Hist. Scholast. c. 35. Rab. Maurus & Gloss. Inter. Gen. 2. 5, 6. Alcuin. Quæst. in Gen. inter. 135.*) and in the Ante-diluvian Earth, as the same Authors witness in other places. As *Hist. Schol. c. 34. Gloss. Ord. in Gen. 7. Alcuin. Inter. 118, &c.* Not to instance in those that tell us the properties of the Ante-diluvian World under the name and notion of Paradise.

Thus much concerning this remarkable place in *S. Peter*, and the true exposition of it; which I have the more largely insisted upon, because I look upon this place as the chief repository of that great natural mystery, which in Scripture is communicated to us, concerning the Triple state or revolution of the World. And of those men that are so scrupulous to admit the Theory we have propos'd, I would willingly know whether they believe the Apostle in what he says

*De 6. dier.
creat.*

says concerning the *New Heavens* and the *New Earth* to come, ver. 13. and if they do, why they should not believe him as much concerning the *Old Heavens* and the *Old Earth*, past; ver. 5, & 6. which he mentions as formally, and describes more distinctly than the other. But if they believe neither past nor to come, in a natural sence, but an unchangeable state of Nature from the Creation to its annihilation, I leave them then to their Fellow Eternalists in the Text, and to the character or censure the Apostle gives them; *κατὰ τὰς ἰδίαις αὐτῶν ἐπιθυμίαις πορεύονται*, men that go by their own private humour and passions, and prefer that to all other evidence.

They deserve this censure, I am sure, if they do not only disbelieve, but also scoff, at this Prophetick and Apostolick doctrine concerning the Vicissitudes of Nature and a triple World; The Apostle in this discourse does formally distinguish three Worlds (for 'tis well known that the *Hebrews* have no word to signify the natural World, but use that Periphrasis, *The Heavens and the Earth*) and upon each of them engraves a name and title, that bears a note of distinction in it; He calls them the *Old Heavens and Earth*, the *Present Heavens and Earth*, and the *New Heavens and Earth*. 'Tis true, these three are one, as to matter and substance; but they must differ as to form and properties; otherwise what is the ground of this distinction and of these three different appellations? Suppose the *Jews* had expected *Ezekiel's* Temple for the Third, and last, and most perfect; and that in the time of the second Temple they had spoke of them with this distinction, or under these different names, The *Old Temple*, the *Present Temple*, and the *New Temple* we expect: Would any have understood those three of one and the same Temple; never demolish'd, never chang'd, never rebuilt; always the same both as to materials and form? no, doubtless, but of three several Temples succeeding one another. And have we not the same reason to understand this Temple of the World, whereof *S. Peter* speaks, to be threefold in succession? seeing he does as plainly distinguish it into the *Old heavens and earth,*

earth, the *Present* heavens and earth, and the *New* heavens and earth. And I do the more willingly use this comparison of the Temple, because it hath been thought an Emblem of the outward World.

I know we are naturally averse to entertain any thing that is inconsistent with the general frame and texture of our own thoughts; That's to begin the World again; and we often reject such things without examination. Neither do I wonder that the generality of Interpreters beat down the Apostle's words and sence to their own notions; They had no other grounds to go upon, and Men are not willing, especially in natural and comprehensible things, to put such a meaning upon Scripture, as is unintelligible to themselves; They rather venture to offer a little violence to the words, that they may pitch the sence at such a convenient height, as their Principles will reach to. And therefore though some of our modern Interpreters, whom I mention'd before, have been sensible of the natural tendency of this discourse of St. Peter's, and have much ado to bear off the force of the words, so as not to acknowledge that they import a real diversity betwixt the two worlds spoken of; yet having no Principles to guide or support them in following that Tract, they are forc'd to stop or divert another way. 'Tis like entering into the mouth of a Cave, we are not willing to venture further than the light goes. Nor are they much to blame for this; the fault is onely in those Persons that continue wilfully in their darkness, and when they cannot otherwise resist the light, shut their eyes against it, or turn their head another way.----- but I am afraid I have staid too long upon this argument: not for my own sake, but to satisfy others.

You may please to remember that all that I have said hitherto, belongs onely to the first Head: To prove a *Diversity in general* betwixt the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth, and the present: not expressing what their particular form was. And this general diversity may be argued also by observations taken from *Moses* his history of the World, before and after the Flood. From the Longevity of the Antediluvians:

The

The Rain-bow appearing after the Deluge: and the breaking open an Abyfs capable to overflow the Earth. The Heavens that had no Rainbow, and under whose benign and steddly influence, Men liv'd seven, eight, nine hundred years and upwards, must have been of a different aspect and constitution from the present Heavens. And that Earth that had such an Abyfs, that the disruption of it made an universal Deluge, must have been of another form than the present Earth. And those that will not admit a diversity in the two worlds, are bound to give us an intelligible account of these Phænomena: How they could possibly be in Heavens and Earth, like the present. Or if they were there once, why they do not continue so still, if Nature be the same.

See Theor.
Book 2. ch. 5.

We need say no more, as to the Ante-diluvian Heavens: but as to the Earth, we must now, according to the second Part of the first Head; enquire, If that *Particular Form*, which we have assign'd it before the Flood, be agreeable to Scripture. You know how we have describ'd the Form and situation of that Earth: namely, that it was built over the Abyfs, as a regular Orb, covering and incompassing the waters round about: and founded, as it were, upon them. There are many passages of Scripture that favour this description: Some more expressly, others upon a due explication. To this purpose there are two express Texts in the Psalms: as *Psal. 24. 1, 2. The Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof: The habitable World, and they that dwell therein. FOR he has founded it upon * the Seas, and establish'd it upon the Floods.* An Earth founded upon the Seas, and establish'd upon the Waters, is not this the Earth we have describ'd? the first Earth, as it came from the hands of its Maker. Where can we

* I know some would make this place of no effect by rendering the Hebrew particle *על* juxta, by or near to; so they would

read it thus, *He hath founded the Earth by the Sea-side*, and establish'd it by the Floods. What is there wonderful in this, that the shores should lie by the Sea-side; Where could they lie else? What reason or argument is this, why the Earth should be the Lord's? The Earth is the Lord's, *for* he hath founded it near the Seas, Where is the consequence of this? But if he founded it upon the Seas, which could not be done by any other hand but his, it shows both the Workman and the Master. And accordingly in that other place, *Psal. 136. 6.* if you render it, *he stretched out the Earth near the Waters*, How is that one of God's great wonders? as it is there represented to be. Because in some few places this particle is render'd otherwise, where the sense will bear it, must we therefore render it so when we please, and where the sense will not bear it? This being the most usual signification of it, and there being no other word that signifies *above* more frequently or determinately than this does, Why must it signify otherwise in this place? Men will wriggle any way to get from under the force of a Text, that does not suit to their own Notions.

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now find in Nature, such an Earth as has the Seas and the Water for its foundation? Neither is this Text without a second, as a fellow-witness to confirm the same truth: For in the 136. *Psalm*, ver. 4, 5, 6. we read to the same effect, in these words: *To him, who alone does great wonders: To him that by wisdom made the Heavens: To him that stretched out the Earth above the Waters.* We can hardly express that form of the Ante-diluvian Earth, in words more determinate than these are; Let us then in the same simplicity of heart, follow the words of Scripture; seeing this literal sense is not repugnant to Nature, but, on the contrary, agreeable to it upon the strictest examination. And we cannot, without some violence, turn the words to any other sense. What tolerable interpretation can these admit of, if we do not allow the Earth once to have encompass'd and overspread the face of the Waters? To be *founded* upon the waters, to be *establish'd* upon the waters, to be *extended* upon the waters, what rational or satisfactory account can be given of these phrases and expressions from any thing we find in the present situation of the Earth: or how can they be verified concerning it? Consult Interpreters, ancient or modern, upon these two places: see if they answer your expectation, or answer the natural importance of the words, unless they acknowledge another form of the Earth, than the present. Because a Rock hangs its nose over the Sea, must the body of the Earth be said to be *stretched over the waters*? Or because there are waters in some subterraneous cavities, is the Earth therefore *founded upon the Seas*? Yet such lame explications as these you will meet with; and while we have no better light, we must content our selves with them; but when an explication is offer'd, that answers the propriety, force, and extent of the words, to reject it, onely because it is not fitted to our former opinions, or because we did not first think of it, is to take an ill method in expounding Scripture. This *Foundation* or *Establishment* of the Earth upon the Seas, this *Extension* of it above the waters, relates plainly to the body, or whole circuit of the Earth, not to parcels and particles of it; as appears from the

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

31

the occasion, and its being joyn'd with the Heavens, the other part of the World. Besides, *David* is speaking of the Origin of the World, and of the Divine power and wisdom in the construction and situation of our Earth, and these attributes do not appear from the holes of the Earth, and broken Rocks; which have rather the face of a ruine, than of wisdom; but in that wonderful libration and expansion of the first Earth over the face of the waters, sustained by its own proportions, and the hand of his Providence.

These two places in the Psalms being duly consider'd, we shall more easily understand a third place, to the same effect, in the *Proverbs*; delivered by *WISDOM*, concerning the Origin of the World, and the form of the first Earth, in these words, *Chap. 8. 27. When he prepared the Heavens I was there, when HE SET an Orb or Sphere upon the face of the Abyss.* We render it, when we set a *Compass* upon the face of the Abyss; but if we have rightly interpreted the Prophet *David*, 'tis plain enough what compass is here to be understood; not an imaginary circle, (for why should that be thought one of the wonderful works of God) but that exterior Orb of the Earth that was set upon the waters. That was the Master-piece of the Divine art in framing of the first Earth, and therefore very fit to be taken notice of by *Wisdom*. And upon this occasion, I desire you to reflect upon *St. Peter's* expression, concerning the first Earth, and to compare it with *Solomon's*, to see if they do not answer one another. *St. Peter* calls it ἡ καθέστηκεσα δι' ὑδάτων, *An Earth consisting, standing, or sustained by the waters.* And *Solomon* calls it חֶגְגֵּן עַל פְּנֵי הַיָּם. *An Orb drawn upon the face of the Abyss.* And *St. Peter* says, that was done τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ by the *wisdom* of God: which is the same Λόγος or *wisdom*, that here declares her self, to have been present at this work. Add now to these two places, the two foremention'd out of the Psalmist; *An Earth founded upon the Seas*, (*Psal. 24. 2.*) and an *Earth stretch'd out above the waters*: (*Psal. 136. 6.*) Can any body doubt or question, but all these four Texts refer to the same thing? And seeing *St. Peter's* description refers certainly to the Ante-diluvian Earth, they must all

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refer to it; and do all as certainly and evidently agree with our Theory concerning the form and situation of it.

The pendulous form and posture of that first Earth being prov'd from these four places, 'tis more easie and emphatical to interpret in this sence that passage in *Job* ch. 26. 7. *He stretcheth out the North over the Tohu,* (for so it is in the original), *and hangeth the Earth upon nothing.* And this strange foundation or no foundation of the exterior Earth seems to be the ground of those noble questions propos'd to *Job* by God Almighty, ch. 38. *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Declare if thou hast understanding. Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastned, and who laid the corner stone?* There was neither foundation, nor corner stone, in that piece of Architecture; and that was it which made the art and wonder of it. But I have spoken more largely to these places in the Theory it self. And if the four Texts before-mentioned be consider'd without prejudice, I think there are few matters of natural Speculation that can be so well prov'd out of Scripture, as the Form which we have given to the Ante-diluvian Earth.

Book 1.
p. 88.

But yet it may be thought a just, if not a necessary appendix to this discourse, concerning the form of the ante-diluvian Earth, to give an account also of the *ante-diluvian Abyss*, and the situation of it according to Scripture; for the relation which these two have to one another, will be a further means to discover if we have rightly determin'd the form of that Earth. The *Abyss* or *Tehom-Rabbah* is a Scripture notion, and the word is not us'd, that I know of, in that distinct and peculiar sence in Heathen Authors. 'Tis plain that in Scripture it is not always taken for the Sea (as *Gen.* 1. 2. & 7. 11. & 49. 25. *Deut.* 33. 13. *Job* 28. 14. & 38. 16. *Pf.* 33. 7. & 71. 20. & 78. 15. & 135. 6. *Apoc.* 20. 1. 3.) but for some other mass of waters, or subterraneous storehouse. And this being observ'd, we may easily discover the nature, and set down the history of the Scripture-Abyss.

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The Mother-Abyfs is no doubt that in the beginning of *Genesis*, ver. 2. which had nothing but darkness upon the face of it, or a thick caliginous air. The next news we hear of this Abyfs is at the Deluge, (*Gen.* 7. 11.) where 'tis said to be broke open, and the waters of it to have drowned the World. It seems then this Abyfs was clos'd up some time betwixt the Creation and the Deluge, and had got another cover than that of darkness. And if we will believe *Wisdom*, (*Prov.* 8. 27.) who was there present at the formation of the Earth, an *Orb* was set upon the face of the Abyfs at the beginning of the World.

That these three places refer to the same Abyfs, I think, cannot be questioned by any that will compare them and consider them. That of the Deluge, *Moses* calls there *Tehom-Rabbah*, the *Great Abyfs*; and can there be any greater than the forementioned Mother-Abyfs? And *WISDOM*, in that place in the *Proverbs*, useth the same phrase and words with *Moses*, *Gen.* 1. 2. על פני תהום, upon the face of the Deep or of the Abyfs; changing darkness for that *Orb* of the exterior Earth which was made afterwards to inclose it. And in this vault it lay, and under this cover, when the Psalmist speaks of it in these words (*Psf.* 33.

7.) *He gathereth the waters of the Sea, as in a * bag; he layeth up the Abyfs in storehouses.* Lastly, we may observe that 'twas this Mother-Abyfs whose womb was burst at the Deluge, when the Sea was born, and broke forth as if it had issued out of a womb; as God expresseth it to *Job*, ch. 38. 8. in which place the *Chaldee Paraphrase* reads it, when it broke forth, coming out of the Abyfs. Which disruption at the Deluge seems also to be alluded to *Job* 12. 14, 15, and more plainly, *Prov.* 3. 20. by his knowledge the Abysses are broken up.

* This reading or translating is generally followed; (Theor. book 1. p. 86.) though the English translation reads on a heap, unsuitably to the matter and to the sense.

Thus you have already a threefold state of the Abyfs, which makes a short History of it; first, *Open*, at the beginning; then *covered*, till the Deluge. Then *broke open* again, as it is at present. And we pursue the History of it no further; but we are told, *Apoc.* 20. 3. That it shall be shut up again, and the great Dragon in it, for a Thousand years. In the mean

time we may observe from this form and posture of the Ante-diluvian Abyfs, how fuitable it is and coherent with that form of the Ante-diluvian Earth which *S. Peter* and the *Pfalmist* had describ'd, *sustain'd by the waters; founded upon the waters; stretcht above the waters;* for if it was the cover of this Abyfs (and it had some cover that was broke at the Deluge) it was spread as a Crust or Ice upon the face of those waters, and so made an *orbis Terrarum*, an habitable sphere of Earth about the Abyfs.

SO much for the form of the Ante-diluvian Earth and Abyfs; which as they aptly correspond to one another, so, you see, our Theory answers and is adjusted to both; and, I think, so fitly, that we have no reason hitherto to be displeas'd with the success we have had in the examination of it, according to Scripture. We have dispatch'd the two main points in question, first, to prove a diversity in general betwixt the two natural Worlds, or betwixt the Heavens and the Earth before and after the Flood. Secondly, to prove wherein this diversity consisted; or that the particular form of the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth was such according to Scripture, as we have describ'd it in the Theory. You'll say, then the work is done, what needs more, all the rest follows of course; for if the Ante-diluvian Earth had such a form as we have propos'd and prov'd it to have had, there could be no Deluge in it but by a dissolution of its parts and exterior frame: And a Deluge so made, would not be in the nature of a standing Pool, but of a violent agitation and commotion of the waters. This is true; These parts of the Theory are so cemented, that you must grant all, if you grant any. However we will try if even these two particulars also may be prov'd out of Scripture; That is, if there be any marks or memorandums left there

there by the Spirit of God, of such a fraction or dissolution of the Earth at the Deluge. And also such characters of the Deluge it self, as show it to have been by a fluctuation and impetuous commotion of the waters.

To proceed then; That there was a Fraction or Dissolution of the Earth at the Deluge, the history of it by *Moses* gives us the first account, seeing he tells us, as the principal cause of the Flood, that the Fountains of the *Great Abyfs* were cloven or burst asunder; and upon this disruption the waters gush'd out from the bowels of the Earth, as from the widen'd mouths of so many Fountains. I do not take *Fountains* there to signifie any more than Sources or Stores of Water; noting also this manner of their eruption from below, or out of the ground, as Fountains do. Accordingly in the *Proverbs*, (*chap. 3. 20.*) 'tis onely said, the *Abysses* were broken open. I do not doubt but this refers to the Deluge, as *Bede*, and others understand it; the very word being us'd here, both in the *Hebrew* and *Septuagint*, that express'd the disruption of the Abyfs at the Deluge.

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ἐπὶ τῶν ὕδατος

And this breaking up of the Earth at that time, is elegantly exprest in *Job*, by the bursting of the Womb of Nature, when the Sea was first brought to light; when after many pangs and throes and dilacerations of her body, Nature was deliver'd of a burthen which she had born in her Womb Sixteen Hundred Years.

c. 38.

These three places I take to be memorials and proofs of the disruption of the Earth, or of the Abyfs, at the universal Deluge. And to these we may add more out of the Prophets, *Job*, and the *Psalms*, by way of allusion (commonly) to the state of Nature at that time. The Prophet *Isaiab* in describing the future destruction of the World, *chap. 24. 18, 19.* seems plainly to allude and have respect to the past destruction of it at the Deluge; as appears by that leading expression, *the windows from an high are open*, אֲרָבוֹת סִמְרוֹם נִפְתָּחוּ. *Supra: ἐκ τοῦ ὕψους ἡνεώχθησαν*, taken manifestly from *Gen. 7. 11.* Then see how the description goes on, *the windows from an high are open, and*
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*Theor. book 2.
p. 194, 195.*

the foundations of the Earth do shake. The Earth is utterly broken down, the Earth is quite dissolv'd, the Earth is exceedingly moved. Here are Concussions, and Fractures, and Dissolutions, as there were in the Mundane Earth-quake and Deluge; which we had express'd before only by *breaking open the Abyss*. By the Foundations of the Earth here and elsewhere, I perceive many understand the Centre; so by *moving or shaking* the foundations, or putting them out of course, must be understood a displacing of the Centre, which was really done at the Deluge, as we have shewn in its proper place. If we therefore remember that there was both a dislocation, as I may so say; and a fraction in the body of the Earth, by that great fall; a dislocation as to the centre, and a fraction as to the surface and exterior region, it will truly answer to all those expressions in the Prophet, that seem so strange and extraordinary. 'Tis true, this place of the Prophet respects also and foretells the future destruction of the World; but that being by Fire, when the *Elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth with the works therein shall be burnt up*, these expressions of *fractures and concussions*, seem to be taken originally from the manner of the World's first destruction, and to be transferr'd, by way of application, to represent and signify the second destruction of it, though, it may be, not with the same exactness and propriety.

There are several other places that refer to the dissolution and subversion of the Earth at the Deluge: *Amos 9. 5, 6. The Lord of Hosts is he that toucheth the Earth, and it shall melt, or be dissolv'd.----- and it shall rise up wholly like a Flood, and shall be drowned as by the Flood of Ægypt.* By this and by the next Verse the Prophet seems to allude to the Deluge, and to the dissolution of the Earth that was then. This in *Job* seems to be call'd *breaking down the Earth, and overturning the Earth*, Chap. 12. 14, 15. *Behold he breaketh down and it cannot be built again, He shutteth upon man, and there can be no opening. Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the Earth:* Which place you may see paraphras'd,

phras'd, *Theor. Book 1. p. 91, 92.* We have already cited, and shall hereafter cite, other places out of *Job*; And as that Ancient Author (who is thought to have liv'd before the Judaical Oeconomy, and nearer to *Noah* than *Moses*) seems to have had the *Præcepta Noachidarum*, so also he seems to have had the *Dogmata Noachidarum*; which were deliver'd by *Noah* to his Children and Posterity, concerning the mysteries of natural Providence, the origine and fate of the World, the Deluge and Ante-diluvian state, &c. and accordingly we find many strictures of these doctrines in the Book of *Job*. Lastly, in the *Psalms* there are Texts that mention the *shaking of the Earth*, and the *foundations* of the World, in reference to the Flood, if we judge aright; whereof we will speak under the next Head, concerning the raging of the Waters in the Deluge.

These places of Scripture may be noted, as left us to be remembrancers of that general ruine and disruption of the Earth at the time of the Deluge. But I know it will be said of them, that they are not strict proofs, but allusions onely. Be it so; yet what is the ground of those allusions? something must be alluded to, and something that hath past in nature, and that is recorded in Sacred History; And what is that, unless it be the universal Deluge, and that change and disturbance that was then in all nature. If others say, that these and such like places are to be understood morally and allegorically, I do not envy them their interpretation; but when nature and reason will bear a literal sense, the rule is, that we should not recede from the letter. But I leave these things to every one's thoughts; which the more calm they are, and the more impartial, the more easily they will feel the impressions of truth. In the mean time, I proceed to the last particular mention'd, *The form of the Deluge it self.*

This we suppose to have been not in the way of a standing Pool, the Waters making an equal Surface, and an equal height every where; but that the extreme height of the Waters was made by the extreme agitation of them; caus'd by the weight and force of
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great Masses or Regions of Earth falling at once into the Abyfs; by which means, as the waters in some places were prest out, and thrown at an excessive height into the air, so they would also in certain places gape, and lay bare even the bottom of the Abyfs; which would look as an open Grave ready to swallow up the Earth, and all it bore. Whilst the Ark, in the mean time, falling and rising by these gulphs and precipices, sometimes above water, and sometimes under, was a true Type of the state of the Church in this World; And to this time and state *David* alludes in the name of the Church, *Psal.* 42. 7. *Abyfs calls unto Abyfs at the noise of thy Cataracts or Water-spouts; All thy waves and billows have gone over me.* And again, *Psal.* 46. 2, 3. in the name of the Church, *Therefore will not we fear, tho' the Earth be removed, and tho' the mountains be carried into the midst of the Seas. The waters thereof roar and are troubled, the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.*

But there is no description more remarkable or more eloquent, than of that Scene of things represented, *Psal.* 18. 7, 8, 9, &c. which still alludes, in my opinion, to the Deluge-scene, and in the name of the Church. We will set down the words at large.

Ver. 6. *In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God; He heard my voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him into his ears.*

7. *Then the Earth shook and trembled, the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.*

8. *There went up a smoke from his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it.*

9. *He bowed the Heavens also and came down, and darkness was under his feet.*

10. *And he rode upon a Cherub and did flie, he did flie upon the wings of the wind.*

11. *He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skie.*

12. *At the brightness before him the thick clouds passed, hail and coals of fire.*

13. *The Lord also thunder'd in the Heavens, and the Highest*

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

39

Highest gave his voice, hail and coals of fire.

14. *Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scatter'd them: and he shot out lightnings and discomfited them.*

15. *Then the Channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the World were discovered; at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.*

He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of great waters. מִיָּם רַבִּים

This I think is a rough * draught of the face of the Heavens and the Earth at the Deluge, as the last Verses do intimate; and 'tis apply'd to express the dangers and deliverances of the Church: The Expressions are far too high to be apply'd to *David* in his Person, and to his deliverance from *Saul*; no such agonies or disorders of nature as are here instanc'd in, were made in *David's* time, or upon his account; but 'tis a scheme of the Church, and of her fate, particularly, as represented by the Ark, in that dismal distress, when all nature was in confusion. And though there may be some things here intermixt to make up the Scene, that are not so close to the subject as the rest, or that may be referr'd to the future destruction of the world: yet that is not unusual, nor amiss, in such descriptions, if the great strokes be fit and rightly plac'd. That there was smoke, and fire, and water, and thunder, and darkness, and winds, and Earth-quakes at the Deluge, we cannot doubt, if we consider the circumstances of it; Waters dash'd and broken make a smoke and darkness, and no Hurricano could be so violent as the motions of the Air at that time; Then the Earth was torn in pieces, and its Foundations shaken; And as to thunder and lightning, the encounters and collisions of the mighty Waves, and the cracks of a falling World, would make flashes and noises, far greater and more terrible, than any that can come from vapors and clouds. There was an universal Tempest, a conflict and clashing of all the Elements; and *David* seems to have represented it so; with God All-mighty in the midst of it, ruling them all.

See Philo Judæus his description of the Deluge, both as to the commotions of the Heavens,

and the fractions of the Earth. In his first Treatise de Abrahamo, mibi p. 279.

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But I am apt to think some will say, all this is Poetical in the Prophet, and these are hyperbolical and figurate expressions, from which we cannot make any inference, as to the Deluge and the natural World. 'Tis true, those that have no Idea of the Deluge, that will answer to such a Scene of things, as is here represented, must give such a flight account of this Psalm. But on the other hand, if we have already an Idea of the Deluge that is rational, and also consonant to Scripture upon other proofs, and the description here made by the Prophet answer to that Idea, whether then is it not more reasonable to think that it stands upon that ground, than to think it a meer fancy and Poetical Scene of things: This is the true state of the case, and that which we must judge of. Methinks 'tis very harsh to suppose all this a bare fiction, grounded upon no matter of fact, upon no Sacred story, upon no appearance of God in nature. If you say it hath a moral signification, so let it have, we do not destroy that; it hath reference, no doubt, to the dangers and deliverances of the Church; but the question is, whether the words and natural sense be a fancy onely, a bundle of randome hyperboles: or whether they relate to the history of the Deluge, and the state of the Ark there representing the Church. This makes the sense doubly rich, historically and morally; and grounds it upon Scripture and reason, as well as upon fancy.

That violent eruption of the Sea out of the Womb of the Earth, which Job speaks of, is, in my judgment, another description of the Deluge; 'tis Chap. 38. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Who shut up the Sea with doors, when it broke forth, as if it had issued out of a Womb; When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swadling band for it. And broke up for it my decreed place hitherto shalt thou come, &c.* Here you see the birth

* *Uti comparatio præcedens de ortu Telluris, sumitur ab ædificatione, ita hæc altera de ortu*

maris, sumitur a partu; & exhibetur Oceanus, primum, ut fœtus inclusus in utero, dein ut erumpens & prodeuns, denique ut fasciis & primis suis pannis involutus. Atque ex aperto Terræ utero prorupit aquarum moles, ut proluvies illa, quam simul cum fœtu profundere solet puerpera. || Ver. 4, 5, 6.

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and thick darkness. This cannot refer to any thing; that I know of, but to the face of Nature at the Deluge; when the Sea was born, and wrapt up in clouds and broken waves, and a dark impenetrable mist round the body of the Earth. And this seems to be the very same that *David* had exprest in his description of the Deluge, *Psal.* 18. 11. *He made darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.* For this was truly the face of the World in the time of the Flood, tho' we little reflect upon it. And this dark confusion every where, above and below, arose from the violent and confus'd motion of the Abyss; which was dasht in pieces by the falling Earth, and flew into the air in misty drops, as dust flies up in a great ruine. See Theor. Book 1. p. 99.

But I am afraid, we have staid too long upon this particular, *the form of the Deluge*; seeing 'tis but a Corollary from the precedent article about the dissolution of the Earth. However time is not ill spent about any thing that relates to natural Providence, whereof the two most signal instances in our Sacred Writings, are, the *Deluge* and the *Conflagration*. And seeing *Job* and *David* do often reflect upon the works of God in the external creation, and upon the administrations of Providence, it cannot be imagin'd that they should never reflect upon the Deluge; the most remarkable change of Nature that ever hath been, and the most remarkable judgment upon mankind. And if they have reflected upon it any where, 'tis, I think, in those places and those instances which I have noted; and if those places do relate to the Deluge, they are not capable, in my judgment, of any fairer or more natural interpretation than that which we have given them; which, you see, how much it favours and confirms our Theory.

I have now finisht the heads I undertook to prove, that I might shew our Theory to agree with Scripture in these three principal points; first, in that it supposeth a diversity and difference betwixt the Antediluvian Heavens and Earth, and the present Heavens and Earth. Secondly, in assigning the particular

form of the Ante-diluvian Earth and Abyfs. Thirdly, in explaining the Deluge by a dissolution of that Earth, and an eruption of the Abyfs. How far I have succeeded in this attempt, as to others, I cannot tell; but I am sure I have convinc'd my self, and am satisfied that my thoughts, in that Theory, have run in the same tract with the holy writings: with the true intent and spirit of them. There are some persons that are wilfully ignorant in certain things, and others that are willing to be ignorant as the Apostle phraseth it; speaking of those Eternalists that denyed the doctrine of the change and revolutions of the Natural World: And 'tis not to be expected but there are many still of the same humour; and therefore may be called *willingly ignorant*, that is, they will not use that pains and attention that is necessary for the examination of such a doctrine, nor impartiality in judging after examination; they greedily lay hold on all evidence on one side, and willingly forget, or slightly pass over, all evidence for the other; this I think is the character of those that are *willingly ignorant*; for I do not take it to be so deep as a down-right wilful ignorance, where they are plainly conscious to themselves of that wilfulness; but where an insensible mixture of humane passions inclines them one way, and makes them averse to the other; and in that method draws on all the consequences of a *willing ignorance*.

There remains still, as I remember, one Proposition that I am bound to make good; I said at first, that our Hypothesis concerning the Deluge was more agreeable not only to Scripture in general, but also to the particular History of the Flood left us by *Moses*; I say, more agreeable to it than any other Hypothesis that hath yet been propos'd. This may be made good in a few words. For in *Moses's* history of the Deluge there are two principal points, The extent of the Deluge, and the Causes of it; and in both these we do fully agree with that sacred Author. *As to the extent of it, He makes the Deluge universal; All the high hills under the whole heaven were cover'd, fifteen cubits upwards;* We also make it universal,
over

over the face of the whole Earth; and in such a manner as must needs raise the waters above the top of the highest hills every where. As to the causes of it, *Moses* makes them to be the disruption of the *Abyss*, and the *Rains*; and no more; and in this also we exactly agree with him; we know no other causes, nor pretend to any other but those two. Distinguishing therefore *Moses* his narration as to the substance and circumstances of it, it must be allowed that these two points make the substance of it, and that an Hypothesis that differs from it in either of these two, differs from it more than Ours; which, at the worst, can but differ in matter of circumstance. Now seeing the great difficulty about the Deluge is the quantity of Water required for it, there have been two explications proposed, besides ours, to remove or satisfy this difficulty; One whereof makes the Deluge not to have been universal, or to have reacht only *Judea* and some neighbouring Countreys; and therefore less water would suffice; The other owning the Deluge to be universal, supplies it self with Water from the Divine Omnipotency, and says new Waters were created then for the nonce, and again annihilated when the Deluge was to cease. Both these explications you see, (and I know no more of note that are not obnoxious to the same exceptions) differ from *Moses* in the substance, or in one of the two substantial points, and consequently more than ours doth. The first changeth the Flood into a kind of national inundation, and the second assigns other causes of it than *Moses* had assigned. And as they both differ apparently from the Mosaical history, so you may see them refuted upon other grounds also, in the third Chapter of the First Book of the Theory.

This may be sufficient as to the History of the Flood by *Moses*. But possibly it may be said the principal objection will arise from *Moses* his Six-days Creation in the first Chapter of *Genesis*: where another sort of Earth, than what we have form'd from the Chaos, is represented to us; namely, a Terraqueous Globe, such as our Earth is at present. 'Tis indeed very apparent, that *Moses* hath accommodated his

his Six-days Creation to the present form of the Earth, or to that which was before the eyes of the people when he writ. But it is a great question whether that was ever intended for a true Physical account of the origine of the Earth: or whether *Moses* did either Philosophize or Astronomize in that description. The ancient Fathers, when they answer the Heathens, and the adversaries of Christianity, do generally deny it; as I am ready to make good upon another occasion. And the thing it self bears in it evident marks of an accommodation and condescension to the vulgar notions concerning the form of the World. Those that think otherwise, and would make it literally and physically true in all the parts of it, I desire them, without entring upon the strict merits of the cause, to determine these Preliminaries. First, whether the whole universe rise from a Terrestrial Chaos. Secondly, what Systeme of the World this Six-days Creation proceeds upon: whether it supposes the Earth, or the Sun, for the Center. Thirdly, Whether the Sun and Fixt Stars are of a later date, and a later birth, than this Globe of Earth. And lastly, Where is the Region of the Super-celestial Waters. When they have determin'd these Fundamentals, we will proceed to other observations upon the Six-days work, which will further assure us, that 'tis a narration suited to the capacity of the people, and not to the strict and physical nature of things. Besides, we are to remember, that *Moses* must be so interpreted in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, as not to interfere with himself in other parts of his History; nor to interfere with *S. Peter*, or the Prophet *David*, or any other Sacred Authors, when they treat of the same matter. Nor lastly, so, as to be repugnant to clear and uncontested Science. For, in things that concern the natural World, that must always be consulted.

With these precautions, let them try if they can reduce that narrative of the Origine of the World, to physical truth; so as to be consistent, both with Nature, and with Divine Revelation every where. It is easily reconcileable to both, if we suppose it
writ

writ in a Vulgar style, and to the conceptions of the People: And we cannot deny that a Vulgar style is often made use of in the holy Writings. How freely and unconcernedly does Scripture speak of God Almighty, according to the opinions of the vulgar: of his *passions, local motions, parts and members of his body*. Which all are things that do not belong, or are not compatible with the Divine nature, according to truth and Science. And if this liberty be taken, as to God himself, much more may it be taken as to his works. And accordingly we see, what motion the Scripture gives to the Sun: what figure to the Earth: what figure to the Heavens: All according to the appearance of sense and popular credulity; without any remorse for having transgressed the rules of intellectual truth.

This vulgar style of Scripture in describing the natures of things, hath been often mistaken for the real sense, and so become a stumbling-block in the way of truth. Thus the *Anthropomorphites* of old contended for the humane shape of God, from the Letter of Scripture; and brought many express Texts for their purpose: but sound reason, at length, got the upper hand of Literal authority. Then, several of the Christian Fathers contended, that there were no *Antipodes*: and made that doctrine irreconcilable to Scripture. But this also, after a while, went off, and yielded to reason and experience. Then, the Motion of the Earth must by no means be allow'd, as being contrary to Scripture: for so it is indeed, according to the Letter and Vulgar style. But all intelligent Persons see thorough this argument, and depend upon it no more in this case, than in the former. Lastly, The original of the Earth from a Chaos, drawn according to the rules of Physiology, will not be admitted: because it does not agree with the Scheme of the Six-days Creation. But why may not this be writ in a Vulgar style, as well as the rest? Certainly there can be nothing more like a Vulgar style, than to set God to *work by the day*, and in Six-days to finish his task: as he is there represented. We may therefore probably hope that all these disguises of truth will at length fall off,

off, and that we shall see God and his Works in a pure and naked Light.

Thus I have finish'd what I had to say in confirmation of this Theory from Scripture. I mean of the former part of it, which depends chiefly upon the Deluge, and the Antediluvian Earth. When you have collated the places of Scripture, on either side, and laid them in the balance, to be weigh'd one against another; If you do but find them equal, or near to an equal poise, you know in whether Scale the Natural Reasons are to be laid: and of what weight they ought to be in an argument of this kind. There is a great difference betwixt Scripture with Philosophy on its side, and Scripture with Philosophy against it: when the question is concerning the Natural World. And this is our Case: which I leave now to the consideration of the unprejudic'd Reader: and proceed to the Proof of the Second Part of the Theory.

THE later Part consists of the *Conflagration of the World*, and the *New Heavens and New Earth*. And seeing there is no dispute concerning the former of these two, our task will now lie in a little compass. Being onely this, To prove that there will be New Heavens, and a New Earth, after the Conflagration. This, to my mind, is sufficiently done already, in the first, second and third Chapters of the 4th. Book, both from Scripture and Antiquity, whether Sacred or profane: and therefore, at present, we will onely make a short and easie review of Scripture-Testimonies, with design chiefly to obviate and disappoint the evasions of such, as would beat down solid Texts into thin Metaphors and Allegories.

The Testimonies of Scripture concerning the *Renovation of the World*, are either express, or implicit. Those I call express, that mention the New Heavens and

and New Earth: And those implicit, that signifie the same thing, but not in exprefs terms. So when our Saviour speaks of a *Palingenesia*, or Regeneration, (*Matt.* 19. 28, 29.) Or St. *Peter* of an *Apocatastasis* or Restitution, (*Act.* 3. 21.) These being words us'd by all Authors, prophane or Ecclesiastical, for the *Renovation* of the World, ought, in reason, to be interpreted in the same sence in the holy Writings. And in like manner, when St. *Paul* speaks of his *Future Earth*, or an *habitable World to come*, *Hebr.* 2. 5. or of a *Redemption* or melioration of the present state of nature, *Rom.* 8. 21, 22. These lead us again, in other terms, to the same *Renovation* of the World. But there are also some places of Scripture, that set the *New Heavens* and *New Earth* in such a full and open view, that we must shut our eyes not to see them. St. *John* says, he saw them, and observ'd the form of the New Earth, *Apoc.* 21. 1. The Seer *Isaiah* spoke of them in exprefs words, many hundred years before. And St. *Peter* marks the time when they are to be introduc'd, namely after the Conflagration, or after the Dissolution of the present Heavens and Earth: *2 Pet.* 3. 12, 13.

These later Texts of Scripture, being so exprefs, there is but one way left to elude the force of them; and that is, by turning the *Renovation of the World* into an Allegory: and making the New Heavens and New Earth to be Allegorical Heavens and Earth, not real and material, as ours are. This is a bold attempt of some modern Authors, who chuse rather to strain the Word of God, than their own notions. There are Allegories, no doubt, in Scripture, but we are not to allegorize Scripture without some warrant: either from an Apostolical interpretation, or from the necessity of the matter: and I do not know how they can pretend to either of these, in this case. However, that they may have all fair play, we will lay aside, at present, all the other Texts of Scripture, and confine ourselves wholly to St. *Peter's* words: to see and examine whether they are, or can be turn'd into an Allegory, according to the best rules of interpretation.

2 Pet. 3. 11,
12, 13.

St. Peter's words are these: *Seeing then all these things shall be dissolv'd, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in holy conversation and godliness? Looking for, and hasting the coming of the Day of God: wherein the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolv'd, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat. NEVERTHELESS, we, according to his promise, look for New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein Righteousness shall dwell.* The Question is concerning this last Verse, *Whether the New Heavens and Earth* here promis'd, are to be real and material Heavens and Earth, or onely figurative and allegorical. The words, you see, are clear: And the general rule of interpretation is this, *That we are not to recede from the letter, or the literal sence, unless there be a necessity from the subject matter; such a necessity, as makes a literal interpretation absurd.* But where is that necessity in this Case? Cannot God make new Heavens and a new Earth, as easily as he made the Old ones? Is his strength decay'd since that time, or is Matter grown more disobedient? Nay, does not Nature offer her self voluntarily to raise a new World from the second Chaos, as well as from the first: and, under the conduct of Providence, to make it as convenient an habitation as the Primæval Earth? Therefore no necessity can be pretended of leaving the literal sence, upon an incapacity of the subject matter.

The second rule to determine an Interpretation to be Literal or Allegorical, is, the use of the same words or phrase in the Context, and the signification of them there. Let's then examine our case according to this rule. St. Peter had us'd the same phrase of *Heavens and Earth* twice before in the same Chapter. *The old Heavens and Earth, ver. 5. The present Heavens and Earth, ver. 7. and now he uses it again, ver. 13. The new Heavens and Earth.* Have we not then reason to suppose, that he takes it here in the same sence, that he had done twice before, for real and material Heavens and Earth? There is no mark set of a new signification, nor why we should alter the sence of the words. That he us'd them always before for the material Heavens and Earth, I think none will question: and

and therefore, unless they can give us a sufficient reason, why we should change the signification of the words, we are bound, by this second rule also, to understand them in a literal sense.

Lastly, The very form of the words, and the manner of their dependance upon the Context, leads us to a literal sense, and to material Heavens and Earth. *NEVERTHELESS*, says the Apostle, *we expect new Heavens, &c.* Why *Nevertheless!* that is, notwithstanding the dissolution of the present Heavens and Earth. The Apostle foresaw, what he had said, might raise a doubt in their minds, whether all things would not be at an end: Nothing more of Heavens and Earth, or of any habitable World, after the Conflagration; and to obviate this, he tells them, *Notwithstanding* that wonderful desolation that I have describ'd, we do, according to God's promises, expect new Heavens and a new Earth, to be an Habitation for the Righteous.

You see then the New Heavens and New Earth; which the Apostle speaks of, are substituted in the place of those that were destroy'd at the Conflagration; and would you substitute Allegorical Heavens and Earth in the place of Material? A shadow for a substance? What an Equivocation would it be in the Apostle, when the doubt was about the material Heavens and Earth, to make an answer about Allegorical. Lastly, the timing of the thing determines the sense. When shall this new World appear? after the Conflagration, the Apostle says: Therefore it cannot be understood of any moral renovation, to be made at, or in the times of the Gospel, as these Allegorists pretend. We must therefore, upon all accounts, conclude, that the Apostle intended a literal sense: real and material Heavens, to succeed these after the Conflagration: which was the thing to be prov'd. And I know not what Bars the Spirit of God can set, to keep us within the Compass of a Literal sense, if these be not sufficient.

Thus much for the Explication of St. Peter's Doctrine, concerning the new Heavens and new Earth: which secures the second Part of our Theory. For the

Theory stands upon two Pillars, or two pedestals, The Ante-diluvian Earth and the Future Earth: or, in *S. Peter's* phrase, The Old Heavens and Earth, and the New Heavens and Earth: And it cannot be shaken, so long as these two continue firm and immoveable. We might now put an end to this Review, but it may be expected possibly that we should say something concerning the *Millennium*: which we have, contrary to the general Sentiment of the modern *Millenaries*, plac'd in the *Future* Earth. Our opinion hath this advantage above others, that, all fanatical pretensions to power and empire in this World, are, by these means, blown away, as chaff before the wind. Princes need not fear to be dethron'd, to make way to the Saints: nor Governments unhing'd, that They may rule the World with a rod of Iron. These are the effects of a wild Enthusiasm; seeing the very state which they aim at, is not to be upon this Earth.

But that our sence may not be mistaken or misapprehended in this particular, as if we thought the Christian Church would never, upon this Earth, be in a better and happier posture than it is in at present: We must distinguish betwixt a *melioration* of the World, if you will allow that word: and a *millennium*. We do not deny a reformation and improvement of the Church, both as to Peace, Purity, and Piety. That knowledge may increase, mens minds be enlarg'd, and Christian Religion better understood: That the power of Antichrist shall be diminish'd, persecution cease, and a greater union and harmony establish'd amongst the Reformed. All this may be, and I hope will be, ere long. But the *Apo-calyptical Millennium*, or the *New Jerusalem*, is still another matter. It differs not in degree only from the present state, but is a new order of things: both in the Moral World and in the Natural; and that cannot be till we come into the *New Heavens* and *New Earth*. Suppose what Reformation you can in this World, there will still remain many things inconsistent with the true Millennial state. Antichrist, tho' weakned, will not be finally destroy'd till the coming of our Saviour, nor Satan bound. And there will

A Review of the Theory of the Earth.

51

will be always poverty, wars, diseases, knaves and hypocrites, in this World: which are not consistent with the *New Jerusalem*, as *S. John* describes it. *Apoc. 21. 2, 3, 4, &c.*

You see now what our notion is of the Millennium, as we deny this Earth to be the Seat of it. 'Tis the state that succeeds the first Resurrection, when Satan is lockt up in the bottomless pit. The state when the Martyrs are to return into Life, and wherein they are to have the first lot and chief share. A state which is to last a thousand years. *And Blessed and Holy is he, that hath a part in it: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be Priests of God and Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.* If you would see more particular reasons of our judgment in this case, why such a Millennium is not to be expected in this World: they are set down in the 8th Chap. of the 4th Book, and we do not think it necessary that they should be here repeated.

As to that dissertation that follows the Millennium, and reaches to the Consummation of all things, seeing it is but problematical, we leave it to stand or fall by the evidence already given. And should be very glad to see the conjectures of others, more learned, in Speculations so abstruse and remote from common knowledge. They cannot surely be thought unworthy or unfit for our Meditations, seeing they are suggested to us by Scripture it self. And to what end were they propos'd to us there, if it was not intended that they should be understood, sooner or later?

I have done with this Review: and shall only add one or two reflections upon the whole discourse, and so conclude. You have seen the state of the Theory of the Earth, as to the *Matter, Form, and Proofs* of it: both Natural and Sacred. If any one will substitute a better in its place, I shall think my self more obliged to him, than if he had shew'd me the Quadrature of the Circle. But it is not enough to pick quarrels here and there: that may be done by any writing, especially when it is of so great extent and comprehension. They must build up, as well as pull down;

down; and give us another Theory instead of this; fitted to the same natural History of the Earth, according as it is set down in Scripture; and then let the World take their choice. He that cuts down a Tree, is bound in reason to plant two, because there is an hazard in their growth and thriving.

Then as to those that are such rigorous Scripturists, as to require plainly demonstrative and irresistible Texts for every thing they entertain or believe; They would do well to reflect and consider, whether for every article in the three Creeds (which have no support from natural reason) they can bring such Texts of Scripture as they require of others: or a fairer and juster evidence, all things consider'd, than we have done for the substance of this Theory. We have not indeed said all that might be said, as to Antiquity: that making no part in this Review, and being capable still of great additions. But as to Scripture and Reason I have no more to add. Those that are not satisfied with the proofs already produc'd upon these two heads, are under a fate, good or bad, which is not in my power to overcome.

FINIS.

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